

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 04022 301912Z

21

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7587

INFO AMCONGEN BELIZE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCSO

C O N F I A E N T I A L GUATEMALA 4022

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, GT, BH, UK

SUBJECT: GUATEMALAN CLAIM TO BELIZE

REF: GUATEMALA 3657

1. DURING CALL BY EMBOFF JULY 29 ON LUIS AYCINENA, DIRECTOR LEGAL AFFAIRS AND TREATIES, GUATEMALAN FONMIN, AYCINENA BROUGHT UP RECENT TALKS WITH UK AND BELIZE REPS IN NEW YORK (REFTEL) AND SAID THEY HAD BEEN "TOTALLY NEGATIVE," WITH NO PROGRESS WHATEVER. HIS OWN VIEW WAS THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SIMPLY LET THINGS STAND AS THEY ARE FOR SOME TIME, AND NOT ATTEMPT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS OR OTHER INITIATIVES, IN HOPES THAT PASSAGE OF TIME WOULD BRING TWO SIDES CLOSER TOGETHER. HE IMMEDIATELY ADDED THAT THIS WOULD BE FEASIBLE ONLY IF UK CONTINUED TO REFRAIN FROM GRANTING INDEPENDENCE TO BELIZE.

2. AYCINENA SAID THAT GUATEMALA UNDERSTOOD THAT RESOLUTION WOULD BE INTRODUCED IN THIS FALL'S UNGA BY BELIZE'S FRIENDS AND THAT MAJOR EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO OBTAIN ITS PASSAGE. IF THIS OCCURRED, THIS WOULD OF
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PAGE 02 GUATEM 04022 301912Z

COURSE BE THE MAJOR ISSUE OF THE UNGA FOR GUATEMALA.

GOG HAD NO INFORMATION YET ON WHAT KIND OF RESOLUTION MIGHT BE INTRODUCED, AND IN ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION EMBOFF SAID WE DID NOT EITHER. AYCINENA SAID GUATEMALA COULD SUPPORT A RESOLUTION SIMILAR TO THOSE WHICH UNGA HAD ADOPTED ON GIBRALTAR AND ON FALKLAND ISLANDS, URGING BOTH SIDES TO SEEK PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO PROBLEM THROUGH NEGOTIATION. NOR WOULD GUATEMALA OBJECT TO INCLUSION OF A REFERENCE TO THE NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF PEOPLE OF BELIZE (WHICH GUATEMALA HAS COME TO RECOGNIZE IN ITS OWN MOST RECENT OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON BELIZE). GUATEMALA COULD ALSO ACCEPT RESOLUTION WHICH REFERRED MATTER TO COMMITTEE OF 24 FOR STUDY. WHAT IT COULD NOT ACCEPT, AND WOULD HAVE TO FIGHT TOOTH AND NAIL, WOULD BE ANY RESOLUTION CALLING UPON UK TO GRANT INDEPENDENCE TO BELIZE WITHOUT PRIOR SETTLEMENT OF GUATEMALA CLAIM.

3. IN SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, GUATEMALAN PRESS JULY 27 CARRIED AP STORY FROM BELIZE ON REPORT BY MINISTER WITH PORTFOLIO COURTENAY TO BELIZE LEGISLATURE ON NEW YORK TALKS. ACCORDING TO AP, COURTENAY SAID NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN A FAILURE AND GOB WOULD ASK UK TO BREAK OFF THE TALKS. HE IS ALLEGED TO HAVE SAID THAT GUATEMALA IS UNCOMPROMISING IN ITS DEMAND FOR A QUARTER OF THE LAND AREA OF BELIZE, AND THAT BELIZE WOULD YIELD NONE OF ITS TERRITORY. COMMENT: NO PUBLIC STATEMENT OF ANY KIND HAS BEEN MADE BY GOG FOLLOWING NEW YORK MEETING. COURTENAY REFERENCE TO DEMAND FOR ONE-QUARTER OF BELIZE TERRITORY IS FIRST PUBLIC REVELATION, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, OF GUATEMALAN NEGOTIATING POSITION.
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